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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 50/58 G of 20 December 1995 on assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia, the General Assembly noted with concern that the political instability and the absence of central authority that continued to characterize Somalia provided a breeding ground for new emergencies. The Assembly reaffirmed the importance it attached to the need for effective coordination and cooperation among the United Nations agencies and their partners since the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia in March 1995 and renewed its appeal to all the Somali parties concerned to terminate hostilities and to engage in a national reconciliation process that would allow for the transition from relief to reconstruction and development.

2. The General Assembly called upon the Secretary-General to continue to mobilize international humanitarian, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance for Somalia and, in view of the critical situation in the country, to apprise the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996 of the progress made in the implementation of the resolution and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-first session. As requested by the Assembly, an oral report was delivered to the Council at its substantive session of 1996 by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. The present report has been prepared in response to the above request by the Assembly.

II. RELIEF AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES

A. General

3. Since the last report to the General Assembly on assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia (A/50/447), steady gains in the humanitarian situation have been achieved in certain parts of Somalia. Other areas of the country have, however, experienced increasingly high levels of vulnerability and hardship. With a few exceptions, northern Somalia has witnessed conditions conducive to rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. At the same time, the humanitarian and security situation in most of the southern portion of the country has worsened. The survival of an important segment of the population, in particular internally displaced persons, women, children and other vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, remains dependent on the provision of relief assistance. Throughout the country, inter-clan fighting, lawlessness and the absence of a recognized national government are major factors hindering the flow of humanitarian assistance and thus slowing the pace of recovery in more stable regions and threatening a recurrence of tragedy in other areas.

4. In spite of continuing insecurity, political instability and related operational difficulties, United Nations agencies and their international and Somali partners have succeeded in delivering substantial emergency and rehabilitation assistance to affected populations in the country. While funding constraints and security conditions have affected many programmes in a negative way, United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross

(ICRC) and non-governmental organizations in Somalia continue to provide food support as well as assistance in health services, clean water supply, education and other fields. Currently, 13 United Nations agencies and organizations are carrying out humanitarian assistance activities throughout the country. The vital presence and efforts of over 50 international non-governmental organizations have kept them at the forefront of relief and rehabilitation interventions in Somalia. More than 10 Somali non-governmental organizations, including three women's organizations, are now working as reliable humanitarian partners of the United Nations agencies in the country.

5. The complex situation prevailing in Somalia has led United Nations agencies and their partners to retain a high degree of flexibility and to adopt creative approaches for the implementation of their activities. Assistance programmes have focused on working directly with Somali communities, whenever possible, to promote sustainability and foster a sense of local ownership. In the absence of a recognized national government, United Nations agencies have continued to exercise a pragmatic approach to interacting with de facto local authorities present in areas of operation. However, the level of collaboration extended by the different Somali administrative structures has varied considerably, with some entities exhibiting a more cooperative attitude than others vis-à-vis the efforts of the international humanitarian community. Humanitarian agencies have experienced serious obstructionist actions on the part of some local authorities over the past year.

6. The efforts of the United Nations and its partners over the past year have played a major role in preventing the country from slipping back into an acute emergency phase. Also, in certain parts of the country, notably the north of Somalia, progress has been made towards reconstructing local economies and infrastructure for social services. However, indicators pointing to a potential deterioration in the humanitarian situation have accumulated since early 1996, particularly in southern Somalia, and, by the middle of the year, United Nations agencies were uncertain how much longer a renewed humanitarian crisis could be held back under prevailing conditions. The health and nutritional status of vulnerable populations has worsened in some parts of the country, reversing to some extent previous gains made in those areas. Food shortages and insecurity have resulted in new population displacements in southern Somalia, creating the risk of a back-flow of Somali refugees into neighbouring countries.

7. A major constraint facing humanitarian operations in the country has been the ever diminishing donor resources available for Somalia. In response to the 1995 United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeal for Somalia, a total of $28.6 million was contributed by the end of 1995, meeting only 30.7 per cent of the appeal's revised requirements. While those contributions have been supplemented by the core resources of United Nations agencies, the total amount of available funding has not approached the level of need in the country. Political instability and the absence of progress towards national reconciliation have made donors more reluctant to provide funding and resources for Somalia. Ironically, it is the climate of instability and insecurity that is largely responsible for keeping Somalia in a high-risk situation, thus increasing humanitarian assistance requirements for the country.

8. Concerned by the conditions affecting humanitarian workers and the various operational difficulties faced in Somalia, the Inter-agency Standing Committee decided to dispatch a high-level inter-agency mission to review humanitarian operations and propose ways to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of assistance programmes in the country. The mission, which was carried out from 1 to 7 February 1996, was led by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and consisted of representatives of nine United Nations agencies and two consortia of international non-governmental-organizations. The mission visited five areas in the country and held consultations with Somali authorities and representatives of the international community. The mission concluded that the continued presence of United Nations agencies in Somalia was essential, not least to prevent any possible recurrence of a major humanitarian crisis. It recommended that the United Nations system, in partnership with Somalia counterparts and non-governmental organizations, formulate a coherent humanitarian programme for Somalia, which, given the varying conditions in different areas of the country, should be a combination of humanitarian and developmental approaches. The mission made a number of additional recommendations relating to resource mobilization, coordination and operational matters. On 19 April 1996, the Inter-agency Standing Committee endorsed the mission's recommendations and mandated the Department of Humanitarian Affairs with the task of monitoring and reporting on their implementation.

9. Significant steps have been made by the United Nations in-country team towards implementation of the recommendations of the February 1996 mission. Regarding the proposed United Nations humanitarian programme for Somalia, the United Nations agencies at the country level have embarked on an inter-agency analytical and consultative process with a view to defining and reaching consensus on the role of the United Nations in the country over the medium-term, reflecting a common system-wide vision and outlining a set of broad objectives and strategies. It is envisaged that the process will result in a forward-looking United Nations inter-agency strategic planning and consolidated resource mobilization document for Somalia, utilizing a new approach of joint programming for humanitarian and rehabilitation needs at the regional level, in accordance with the recommendations of the inter-agency mission and in an attempt to bolster donor commitment to Somalia. To that end, work is under way with the assistance of an expert currently in Nairobi to formulate the future humanitarian programme for Somalia, which will be reflected in the consolidated appeal for 1997.

B. Food security

10. The August 1995 gu (main) season harvest in Somalia was very poor, owing in large part to insufficient rains and pest infestation. Production of the main staple crops reached 171,000 tons, representing only about half of the 1994 gu harvest. The output of the January 1996 der (secondary) harvest was slightly above average, with about 110,000 tons harvested. However, the unfavourable main 1995 harvest had a negative impact on the food security status of populations in many parts of the country through the first half of 1996. The first-phase assessment of the 1996 gu season indicated a number of positive signs for a reasonable harvest overall, but it was too early to determine to

what extent flooding and possible insect and bird infestations in some agricultural areas would have a negative effect on the harvest.

11. Good crop production alone will not ensure adequate food security for the country. The general population's lack of income-earning opportunities and low purchasing power, combined with increasing prices and decreased availability of basic goods on local markets, have aggravated the increasingly fragile food security situation in Somalia. Insecurity and political instability continue to have a major impact on the overall food supply situation in Somalia. The closure of the country's main seaport at Mogadishu since October 1995 and the disruption of commercial trade flows and transportation routes within the country are among the major factors eroding the population's adequate access to food.

12. The impact of the difficult food security situation in southern Somalia came to a head in May 1996 when populations in the Bay, Bakool and Juba valley regions started moving to Kismayo and along the border with Kenya. In response, United Nations agencies in collaboration with non-governmental organizations and donor representatives and in consultation with ICRC prepared a joint plan of action aimed at halting the movement of populations out of those regions and encouraging displaced persons to return to their home communities. As part of the plan, which involved the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and several international non-governmental organizations, relief food and essential drugs were provided to vulnerable groups, seeds and tools were distributed to farming families, special feeding centres were set up and vaccination campaigns were conducted. A second phase of the plan of action for the Juba valley will attempt to strengthen household food security through longer-term agricultural and other interventions in order to discourage future population movements and reduce dependency on external assistance. Similar programmes combining relief and rehabilitation assistance are being carried out in other areas of Somalia.

13. The overall goal of the WFP food aid programme in Somalia is to contribute to the restoration of the country's traditional economic base through support to grass-roots rehabilitation and development-oriented initiatives. Another goal of the programme is to improve food security and the nutritional status of the most vulnerable groups. In order to achieve those goals, WFP supports a wide range of community-based activities in the agriculture, health and education sectors, among others. WFP assistance is also utilized for the promotion of small-scale income-generating schemes, the integration of demobilized militia into civil society and the resettlement of refugees.

14. Between January 1995 and March 1996, WFP distributed a total of 34,176 tons of food aid in Somalia, of which about 85 per cent went through rehabilitation projects and 15 per cent as relief assistance to internally displaced persons, orphans, hospital patients and other disadvantaged populations. An average of 165,000 people per month received WFP food assistance, mainly through food-for-work projects for farmers, local health workers, teachers and other groups. Between January 1995 and May 1996, ICRC distributed a further 3,354 tons of relief food aid to vulnerable groups in Somalia. As part of

project implementation in the southern and central parts of Somalia, WFP procures locally grown cereal in surplus food-producing areas, at appropriate periods of the agricultural cycle, for distribution to beneficiaries in areas facing food deficits. Funds generated under the WFP food monetization programme support agricultural rehabilitation activities and serve to improve household food security.

15. The WFP Food Security Assessment Unit continues to monitor, collect and disseminate data on agricultural production, food availability, market prices, nutritional status of populations and other factors affecting the food security situation in Somalia. Since its establishment in January 1995, the extensive gu and der crop assessment exercises and other surveillance and information-collection activities of the Unit have enabled the aid community to have access to quantitative and qualitative information on food-insecure areas, thereby facilitating timely interventions. In the absence of civil service structures in Somalia, the surveillance activities, early warning information and critical analysis provided by the Food Security Assessment Unit remain crucial. The Unit works in close collaboration with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and donors, as well as the Famine Early Warning System of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). As part of its mandate, the Global Information and Early Warning System of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) monitors the crop and food supply situation in Somalia continuously and, through its regular publications "Foodcrops and Shortages", "Special Africa Report", and special alerts and reports, keeps the international community informed on the situation in the country. An FAO/WFP crop and food supply assessment mission is planned for Somalia during July/August 1996.

C. Agriculture, livestock and fisheries

16. To improve the country's ability to feed itself, the provision of agricultural inputs and plant protection and veterinary services to food-producing communities remains essential. Lack of crop protection activity is among the most serious factors negatively affecting the food supply and food security situation in Somalia. During 1995, an estimated 40 per cent of crops was lost to pests. Livestock production, the backbone of the national economy, has also experienced difficulties owing largely to limited veterinary services.

17. Owing to lack of funding, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been unable to carry out its primary crop-protection mandate in Somalia adequately, with only limited activities having been undertaken over the past year. FAO operations in Somalia are expected to start again following the approval of a project for emergency assistance to farmers affected by the conflict, funded by the Organization's Technical Cooperation Programme. The objectives of the assistance are twofold and include the coordination of emergency interventions implemented by humanitarian organizations in relation to the assessment of evolving agricultural sector requirements and the provision of basic agricultural inputs. As northern Somalia is a traditional breeding ground for locusts, an FAO specialist based at Hargeisa continues to monitor and survey the locust situation in the region, in collaboration with the Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa. A

project to provide emergency assistance to farmers affected by the conflict in Somalia was approved by FAO in June 1996. Project activities include the distribution of cereal and vegetable seeds and support to small-scale plant protection efforts. Additional agricultural inputs carried over from previous FAO projects were distributed to destitute farmers. In May 1996, the Pan-African Rinderpest Campaign of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) started a livestock vaccination campaign in the Mandera area of Kenya near the Somali border with the involvement of FAO, in order to minimize the spread of rinderpest disease in the area, and similar action is required on the Somali side of the border.

18. In an effort to stimulate and promote subsistence food production for vulnerable farming families, WFP has provided support to the agricultural sector over the last four planting seasons. Through an integrated programme, WFP provides direct assistance to farmers and supports related efforts such as rehabilitation of wells, water catchments, canals and other infrastructure. WFP also supports the repair of feeder roads to facilitate easier access to local markets. The WFP local cereal procurement programme assists farming communities in Somalia by stimulating local grain markets, while its food monetization programme generates financial support for agricultural rehabilitation projects. To assist over 200,000 people, ICRC provided seeds to 37,000 farming families in the main agricultural areas of Somalia for the 1996 gu season. The second phase of the ICRC agricultural programme aims to improve vegetable production and to assist in the manufacture of agricultural tools by local blacksmiths.

19. Implementation of a UNDP-supported project for the integrated agricultural and area development of Middle Shabelle started in April 1996. The project, co-financed and executed by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), is designed to diversify and expand crop production, increase rural employment and improve investment opportunities. Specific project activities include, inter alia, rehabilitation of irrigation canals and other small-scale agricultural infrastructure, establishment of extension services, provision of credit facilities and development of small-scale income-generating schemes related to agriculture. The project, originally planned for the Juba valley, was relocated to Middle Shabelle owing to security considerations.

20. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) continued implementation of the Beyond Relief Programme in the Bay region until unacceptable security conditions forced the suspension of project activities in September 1995. Prior to the suspension, the Beyond Relief Programme had made a substantial contribution towards strengthening household food security and rehabilitating the agricultural and livestock sector in the project area through the implementation of participatory community-based interventions, ranging from the training of local blacksmiths to the execution of migratory pest-control campaigns. The sustainability of the programme's activities is manifested in the favourable level of crop projection achieved in the project area, even after the suspension of activities. IFAD is currently in the process of relocating the Beyond Relief Programme to north-west Somalia.

21. FAO and UNDP are collaborating in the implementation of an artisanal fisheries project in Lower and Middle Shabelle and Benadir regions. The project provides assistance to rebuild war-ravaged infrastructure for the small-scale

fishing industry, ensure a regular supply of fish for human consumption and improve income and employment opportunities in coastal communities. ICRC has distributed fishing materials to some 6,000 families in the Kismayo area. A number of other small-scale activities in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors are being supported in many areas of the country through UNHCR quick impact projects and the UNDP Somalia Rural Rehabilitation Programme, among other initiatives.

D. Health

22. Since 1991, there has been an increase in the level of communicable diseases, while at the same time, a significant reduction in the number of qualified Somali professionals working in the heath sector in the country has occurred. Low immunization coverage, poor water and sanitation conditions and the population's limited access to health services have exacerbated the situation. Diarrhoeal diseases, anaemia, malaria and acute respiratory infections remain among the leading causes of mortality in the country. United Nations agencies and their partners in Somalia have made concerted efforts to protect the health status of the population in the face of difficult conditions. In collaboration with WHO and non-governmental organizations, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF supports a total of 128 maternity health-care centres throughout Somalia, which provide mothers and children with a wide range of basic health and nutrition services, including vitamin and iron and folic acid supplements. UNICEF also supports 81 outpatient dispensaries, 470 health posts, 21 hospitals and 33 supplementary and therapeutic feeding centres, again in close cooperation with WHO and implementing non-governmental organizations. WFP supports health services by providing food rations to workers in primary health-care facilities and hospitals.

23. The number of malnourished children, pregnant women and nursing mothers receiving supplementary feeding through the 33 feeding centres declined over the past year from a monthly average of 22,000 beneficiaries to about 15,800. However, deteriorating food security conditions in the first half of 1996 have led to new increases in attendance in Mogadishu and in the Juba valley. In preparation for a possible nutrition crisis, WHO provided 22 Somalia health professionals with training for trainers, covering the operation of therapeutic feeding centres and methodologies for emergency nutritional assessments. In addition, copies of the WHO standard guidelines for emergency nutritional assessments, as well as the United States Centers for Disease Control/WHO nutritional assessment computer software, were distributed to international non-governmental organizations operational in Somalia.

24. WHO continued to give technical and material support to 13 tuberculosis treatment activities in Somalia and has provided training and laboratory support for three new anti-tuberculosis activities. Close to 3,000 tuberculosis patients completed directly observed therapy over the past year. WHO distributed 20 containers of essential drugs to non-governmental organizations and local health authorities to assist in the treatment of acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malaria and other diseases. Basic equipment and reagents were provided to support or establish five laboratories and three X-ray machines

were donated to selected local health facilities. In addition, WHO provided HIV/AIDS test kits to eight local health facilities in the country.

25. UNICEF continues to provide essential drugs and supplies to maternity health-care centres, health posts and other facilities, with increased emphasis on supervision and monitoring of programme activities to ensure efficiency and promote capacity-building. Between January 1995 and March 1996, ICRC provided a total of 167 tons of medical supplies to hospitals and other health facilities in Mogadishu, Hiran, Galgudud, Gedo, the Juba valley, the north-east and the north-west. In April 1996, in response to renewed heavy fighting in Mogadishu, a further 17 tons of emergency medical supplies was airlifted by ICRC to the city in order to assist in the treatment of the war-wounded, in collaboration with the Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS). ICRC supports a food-for-work programme for 250 staff members at Digfer hospital and a training programme for selected medical staff of Keysaney hospital in Mogadishu. In the Juba valley, a community-based pilot health programme was implemented by ICRC in five villages during the first quarter of 1996. UNHCR has supported the rehabilitation of health infrastructure in major areas of resettlement.

26. In parallel with the provision of essential drugs, WHO organized training sessions for Somali health professionals on various topics, including the rational use of drugs, the collection and analysis of basic health data and the control and treatment of prevalent diseases. WHO has shifted its focus towards capacity-building within the Somali health sector, through training of laboratory technicians, private pharmacists and drug importers and support to the development of coordinated sustainable drug-supply programmes. Four Somali health professionals have been sponsored to attend a training programme in emergency preparedness and response, organized jointly by WHO and ICRC. As part of a joint United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WHO reproductive health effort in Somalia, more than 500 nurses, midwives and traditional birth attendants have been provided with training in order to upgrade their skills in maternal and child health and family planning services. WHO has so far provided equipment and drugs to 25 maternity health-care centres under the project. UNICEF continues to support training activities for traditional birth attendants and community health workers.

27. In February 1996, cholera, which has now become endemic in Somalia, reappeared in Mogadishu and Kismayo and subsequently spread to many other areas of the country, including isolated rural communities. At the outset of the outbreak, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations established inter-agency cholera task forces at the central and regional levels in order to design and implement a coordinated programme of preventive and curative interventions in all affected areas. As in previous years, those consolidated efforts were effective in containing the epidemic and minimizing cholera-related fatalities. WHO provided some 30,000 litres of ringer lactate as well as other supplies and additional drugs required for the treatment of up to 12,000 cases of acute diarrhoea. UNICEF organized and coordinated massive anti-cholera water disinfection campaigns undertaken in many areas of the country by non-governmental organizations and Somali volunteers, and provided oral rehydration salts and other supplies. International non-governmental organizations were instrumental in combating the outbreak through their direct support to and supervision of isolation facilities and cholera treatment

centres. ICRC and SRCS also carried out cholera prevention efforts in Mogadishu and other hard-hit areas. The 1996 cholera outbreak had subsided by the middle of the year, with a total of 10,274 cases and 464 deaths recorded by WHO, representing a case fatality rate of 4.5 per cent.

28. At a time when many parts of the world are making substantial progress in the elimination of preventable diseases, the gains in immunization coverage achieved in Somalia during 1993 are being lost because of instability and high costs. In response to an increase in the number of cases of measles in Mogadishu, over 170,000 children under five years of age were vaccinated against the disease between November 1995 and February 1996 under an extensive immunization campaign conducted in the city by UNICEF with the assistance of WHO, non-governmental organizations and local health authorities. In 1995, WHO and UNICEF in collaboration with non-governmental organizations developed a new coordinated community-based strategy for an expanded immunization programme in Somalia.

29. In collaboration with WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has produced a set of health education textbooks, charts and other materials for use in primary schools in Somalia. The WHO guidelines for the treatment of acute respiratory infections and sexually transmitted diseases were translated into Somali by UNESCO and distributed to health facilities in the country. Seven additional villages have joined the WHO Basic Minimum Needs programme, which strives to support community efforts to meet local needs in a sustainable manner, bringing to 62 the number of Somali villages targeted under the programme. To combat malaria, WHO has supported initiatives to breed special larvivorous fish that eat mosquito larvae found in stagnant waters. WHO and the United Nations Development Office for Somalia, in collaboration with international non-governmental organizations and local health authorities, are working on the development of a health-information system for Somalia. WHO is also promoting the use of available technology for the planning of health systems and is working with the Development Office on the production of special maps for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the health sector.

E. Water and sanitation

30. Access to safe drinking water and adequate waste disposal are integral to efforts aimed at protecting the health status and well-being of Somali populations. As regards water and sanitation, UNICEF rehabilitated or constructed several piped water systems and a total of 269 other water sources, including wells and boreholes, providing potable water to approximately 200,000 people in rural and urban areas of Somalia. UNHCR supported the rehabilitation of an additional 35 wells and 20 water catchments over the past year, with the assistance of WFP food inputs. Some 72 water and environmental sanitation committees have been formed at the community level and their members have been provided with training in order to enable the committees to take over water and sanitation responsibilities. UNICEF has constructed some 293 pit latrines, mainly at health and education facilities, providing improved sanitation conditions for some 40,000 people. Training of pump mechanics by UNICEF also contributes to the sustainability of interventions in the sector.

31. WHO guidelines for water and sanitation were distributed in collaboration with UNICEF in order to improve the quality and safety of water-harvesting and water-production efforts. As part of UNICEF social mobilization work, health and hygiene messages have been disseminated to people through radio broadcasts, plays and other means. The massive water disinfection campaign undertaken by non-governmental organizations during the first half of 1996 with the support of UNICEF, other United Nations agencies and ICRC played a major role in curbing the spread of cholera in the country. Since 1995, ICRC has dug or rehabilitated over 70 wells and boreholes in Mogadishu, Mudug and the Juba valley, and a total of 35 wells were equipped with hand pumps.

32. In the first months of 1996, a prolonged dry season and ensuing water shortages in drought-prone areas of northern Somalia led to population movements and high mortality rates among livestock. To help the affected populations and support local coping mechanisms, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations assisted with the delivery of potable water, the provision of food aid to the most vulnerable groups and the repairing of strategic water wells and boreholes in the worst affected areas. The assistance was undertaken in collaboration with local authorities through inter-agency drought task forces set up at Hargeisa and Bossaso. ICRC rehabilitated a strategic borehole for livestock in the Sool region and provided spare parts for two other boreholes in the area.

F. Education

33. The provision of basic education to vulnerable groups, in particular to female children, has suffered a setback owing to renewed hostilities in several parts of Somalia combined with the withdrawal or scaling down of assistance by some humanitarian agencies. Widespread school closures are reported and, in the absence of sustainable mechanisms for remunerating teachers, the quality of education in the schools that continue to operate is likely to deteriorate further. As a result, the positive impact of donor investments made in favour of the education sector in 1993/94 has been placed at risk. In addition, the presence of a large unschooled or undereducated population in Somalia carries future social and development costs for the country. United Nations agencies and their partners have thus been working to protect and promote basic education, in particular through support to primary schools.

34. UNESCO, UNICEF and implementing non-governmental organizations support about 750 primary and Koranic schools in the country, catering to a total population of about 160,000 children. UNICEF continues to distribute education kits and other learning materials to functioning schools. The UNESCO education development centres at Mogadishu, Baidoa, Hargeisa, Garoe and Djibouti and its education rehabilitation units at Garbaharey and Hoddur facilitate the development of curricular materials and teacher training efforts for the country. WFP provides important support to the education sector through food-for-work inputs for teachers and trainees and its special feeding programmes for students. The rehabilitation of school buildings is supported by UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR and WFP.

35. UNESCO has produced and organized the distribution of primary-level textbooks for Somalia, including a special edition for use in the north-west. Twenty-nine teacher-guide titles have been prepared, of which 25,000 copies have been printed in the low-cost print shops attached to the education development centres. A total of 1,900 emergency education packages developed by UNESCO were distributed in internally displaced settlements, rural areas and refugee camps. Each package serves as a self-contained classroom, with supplies and instructional materials for a class of 40 students. UNESCO has also prepared educational cloth charts, adult literacy materials and, in collaboration with UNHCR, environmental education kits for use in primary schools in Somali refugee camps in Kenya.

36. Through a joint training programme, UNICEF and UNESCO have created a cadre of regional trainers who mobilize community support and undertake school monitoring and inspection functions, in addition to providing training to others. A set of training-of-trainers' materials and a video on good classroom practices have been produced. UNESCO conducted over 100 training workshops for head teachers in 15 regions of the country and in Somali refugee camps in Kenya, Djibouti and Yemen. The UNESCO Somalia Open Learning Unit, which provides in-service teacher training to practising but untrained teachers leading up to a diploma, is expanding and currently operates five centres in four regions.

37. UNESCO and the United Nations Development Office for Somalia conducted comprehensive educational surveys in the Bay, Middle Shabelle, Bari, Nugal and Mudug regions of Somalia. As part of the mid-decade review of progress towards Education For All, a country case study on Somalia was completed under the coordination of UNESCO and presented at the regional Education For All policy review seminar held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in February 1996. In order to contribute to the sustainability of educational programmes, UNESCO, UNICEF and WFP have assisted in the formation of local and regional education boards or committees.

G. Refugees and returnees

38. Between December 1994 and December 1995, over 40,000 Somali refugees in Kenya returned to Somalia under the UNHCR voluntary repatriation programme, mainly to the Juba valley and the north-east. Some 700 Somali refugees were repatriated by UNHCR from Kenya to the north-east in April and May 1996, and another 12,000 Somali refugees were expected to return to Somalia mainly from neighbouring countries during the remainder of the year. The return of refugees places an additional burden on already fragile local infrastructures and the provision of continued support to returnees is vital to ensure their sustainable reintegration.

39. In the absence of a recognized government and effective national counterparts, international aid agencies are being called upon to play a substantial role in meeting the reintegration needs of the returnees. UNHCR and its partners supports initiatives to strengthen and improve basic socio-economic conditions and infrastructure in areas of return, thereby encouraging stability and the full integration of the returnees into the recipient communities. Towards this end, quick impact projects, focusing on the rehabilitation of

social services and the creation of income-generating opportunities, are being implemented in the Juba valley and the north-east regions, directly benefiting a total of 170,000 people in resettlement areas. Since 1991, over 700 quick impact projects in the education, water, health and other sectors have been implemented in Somalia. UNHCR will continue to facilitate and prepare the ground for the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees. As of June 1996, a total of 475,000 Somali refugees remained registered in camps in Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Yemen.

40. UNHCR currently runs a cross-border operation from Kenya and maintains field offices in Hargeisa, Bossaso, Galcayo and Kismayo. This field presence enables UNHCR to monitor post-return living conditions closely and to facilitate rapid response. Some 800 Somalis crossed the border as refugees into Kenya in May and June 1996, when food shortages, insecurity and minority targeting led to population movements in parts of southern Somalia. UNHCR participated in the preparation and implementation of the consolidated plan of action undertaken by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations in order to prevent a renewed refugee influx into Kenya. WFP provides interim food rations to returnees in order to assure their subsistence during initial reintegration and resettlement periods. ICRC has distributed relief food aid to thousands of vulnerable returnee families in Bardera, the Juba valley and other areas of the country over the past year.

H. Internally displaced persons

41. By mid-1995, inter-agency plans and strategies were in place for the resettlement of internally displaced persons to chosen areas of return within Somalia. However, the implementation of return-and-reintegration programmes was subsequently disrupted because of increased political instability and armed conflict, in particular in southern Somalia, provoking renewed population movements, mainly towards relatively peaceful areas in the north-east and north-west, but also within the southern regions of the country. United Nations agencies and organizations are exploring viable strategy options for the provision of assistance to the country's internally displaced populations under current conditions. It is estimated that there are presently at least 200,000 internally displaced persons in Somalia. They remain among the most vulnerable groups in the country.

42. The largest concentration of internally displaced persons is found in Mogadishu, where a survey by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in October 1995 revealed a total of 54,680 people living in 109 camps. Other major areas of displaced settlements are in Bossaso, Burao and Kismayo. The United Nations and non-governmental-organization consolidated programme of food and non-food assistance initiated in May 1996 in the Juba valley was designed to halt population movements and to support resettlement of internally displaced persons. As part of its assistance activities in Lower and Middle Juba, ICRC has over the past year provided food aid and other relief items to thousands of displaced persons in Kismayo and other areas of the valley.

43. To assist people fleeing insecurity in the Baidoa area in 1995, ICRC distributed plastic sheeting, blankets and other survival items to over 20,000

displaced families living in the Bay, Bakool and Gedo regions, and similar relief supplies were provided to 5,000 families displaced by fighting in the Middle Shabelle region. Under an operation undertaken by UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, some 14 tons of non-food relief supplies were airlifted from the Department's warehouse in Pisa, Italy, for distribution to internally displaced persons affected by heavy rains and flooding at Mogadishu in November 1995. In February 1996, ICRC distributed additional relief supplies to 15,000 families in the city's camps for internally displaced persons. In northern Somalia, ICRC distributed non-food relief items to over 60,000 internally displaced and conflict-affected persons, as well as returnees.

44. WFP continues to provide relief food assistance to vulnerable internally displaced populations in Somalia, including over 57,000 conflict-affected people in the Burao area. In general, WFP strives to limit food aid provided to displaced persons in order to discourage relief dependency and to encourage return to home communities, whenever feasible. Internally displaced persons, as well as returnees and host communities, also benefit from the network of UNICEF-supported primary health-care facilities and many other United Nations relief and rehabilitation programmes under implementation in the country. Although not falling directly under its mandate, UNHCR remains concerned about the plight of the country's internally displaced population and exercises an advocacy role vis-à-vis aid agencies and local authorities. UNHCR and UNFPA have embarked on a joint initiative to study and compile information on the socio-economic characteristics of populations in major areas of displacement and resettlement.

III. RECONSTRUCTION STRATEGIES AND EFFORTS

45. Although a return to acute humanitarian crisis has been averted, political instability and the ensuing insecurity have prevented the country as a whole from moving into a straightforward reconstruction mode and, under current conditions, possibilities for medium- or long-term economic and social development are limited. In addition, as there are no recognized counterparts in Somalia, traditional instruments of the United Nations system to assist Governments in achieving national recovery and development objectives, including preparation of a country strategy note, are not applicable in the country. However, relatively stable conditions in certain locations have created an environment conducive to some reconstruction and development-oriented work and, despite the inherent risks associated with the absence of a formal economy, several parts of Somalia have moved out of emergency situations, enabling the reactivation of business and other economical activities, in particular in the northern regions.

46. Faced with that reality, United Nations agencies operating in Somalia have adopted a regional approach whereby interventions are designed and implemented to address the prevailing situation in each geographical area, taking into account the area's relative position along the relief-to-development continuum. In another sense, however, the distinction between relief and rehabilitation assistance in Somalia is becoming increasingly blurred, as the main underlying causes of human suffering and emergency needs remain the population's lack of purchasing power and employment opportunities combined with the absence of civil

and social infrastructure and institutions of governance. In that context, assistance for relief, rehabilitation and, to some extent, reconstruction has become inextricably linked.

47. The Code of Conduct for International Rehabilitation and Development Assistance to Somalia, adopted by the Somalia Aid Coordination Body in 1995, and the Guidelines for United Nations Humanitarian Relief Operations in Somalia, continue to offer a general framework for optimal operational conditions for international aid to Somalia. The Somalia Aid Coordination Body is monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct, which has been utilized on several occasions over the past year as the basis for collective action by United Nations agencies, donors, non-governmental organizations and other international organizations. A document adopted by the Coordination Body in June 1996 on working arrangements between the international aid community and responsible Somali authorities, reaffirmed the Code's basic principle that the effective execution of international assistance remains the responsibility of the Somali people and that peace, security and the existence of responsible Somali authorities are prerequisites for the sustainable implementation of rehabilitation and development activities in the country. The June 1996 document also reaffirmed the commitment of the international aid community to providing assistance to those in need in Somalia and to remaining neutral on issues of a purely political nature.

48. The United Nations strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Somalia continues to focus largely on the implementation of sustainable community-based activities in support of local coping mechanisms and to bolster self-sufficiency. The UNDP Somalia rural rehabilitation programme assists communities to build their self-reliance capabilities and to meet basic minimum needs through the provision of technical assistance and small investment capital. Under the programme, some 85 small-scale projects are currently under implementation, in close collaboration with the target communities, primarily in the areas of employment-generation and infrastructure rehabilitation. The Programme, which is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services of the Secretariat, is currently active in the north-east and north-west parts of Somalia, and plans are under way to expand activities into the Gedo region. A comparable UNDP-supported integrated agricultural and area development project, executed by UNV, began activities in the Middle Shabelle region in June 1996.

49. A programme of assistance being undertaken by UNDP and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is building the capacity of Somali staff in the management of essential aviation facilities and services in the country. Training has been provided in air traffic control, aeronautical information services, fire-fighting and other areas, which has improved the safety of air operations and facilitated the delivery of humanitarian aid and commercial goods. The project has also upgraded major airstrips, provided basic airport equipment and assisted local authorities to develop airport revenue-generation systems. To contribute to the recovery of local economy and the alleviation of poverty, UNDP in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continues implementation of a project to assist in the rehabilitation and sustainable operation of Somali ports, which are vital to trade and the sustenance of many people's livelihoods. The project has

supported the establishment of viable port authorities at Berbera, Bossaso and Kismayo, and has provided technical assistance and equipment as well as training for port personnel.

50. The United Nations Development Office for Somalia, a UNDP project executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services, is focusing on strengthening the planning and management capacities of local and regional administrative structures in Somalia and is working closely with United Nations agencies, donors, non-governmental organizations and Somali institutions to integrate and link inter-sectorial programmes and projects in order to ensure effective and efficient resource utilization. Other core functions of the Development Office currently include economic planning and policy analysis, development of statistical databases and maintenance of a documentation unit on Somalia. The Development Office continues to provide secretariat support to the Somalia Aid Coordination Body.

51. UNDP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) have begun implementation of an urban settlement and management programme at Hargeisa. The programme is designed to improve urban living conditions and strengthen municipal institutional capacities for the planning and operation of urban facilities and public services, including water supply and solid waste management. Among other activities, the project is assisting in the preparation of a medium-term human resource development programme and a plan of action for infrastructure rehabilitation, as well as establishing systematic monitoring and maintenance mechanisms and generating job opportunities for female-headed households. Somalia is covered in an initiative of UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank to produce a strategic action programme for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden aimed at safeguarding the region's marine resources and providing guidelines for environmentally sound development plans and projects.

52. As there are an estimated 1 million landmines still laid in Somali soil, UNESCO mine-awareness materials remain relevant and are used in schools, while ICRC in collaboration with SRCS is launching a mine-awareness campaign in Mogadishu, targeted towards youth and militia groups. UNESCO has distributed, in the form of video and audio tapes, a play promoting demobilization and disarmament. Also developed by UNESCO are a video containing Somali peace songs and a primary-level peace education package. UNDP, UNHCR and WFP have supported demobilization activities in certain areas of the country. Following the first symposium on the culture of peace in Somalia, which was held in 1995 in Sana'a, two additional culture of peace meetings took place in Paris and Addis Ababa. These were organized by UNESCO with the collaboration of the European Union (EU) and attended by Somali intellectuals both resident in and outside Somalia. Several Somali women have taken part in training-of-trainers' workshops covering conflict-resolution and community-based mediation techniques, organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). UNIFEM is also in the process of carrying out a research study on the role of Somali women in the country's peace process.

IV. COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS

53. The need for close coordination and collaboration among humanitarian partners in Somalia has intensified over the past year in view of continued insecurity and instability, the absence of effective national counterparts, limited donor resources and the precarious humanitarian situation. The United Nations Coordination Team, chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative, who is also the United Nations Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator for Somalia, continues to be a useful forum for the regular exchange of information on the activities of its members, as well as on the security, political and humanitarian situation in the country. The United Nations Coordination Team consists of senior representatives of all 13 United Nations agencies and organizations operational in the country, as well as the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies. The United Nations Coordination Team cooperates closely with national and international non-governmental organization consortia and the Somalia Aid Coordination Body. The United Nations Coordination Unit, which was established as a division within the UNDP country office, continues to play an important role in facilitating and strengthening coordination and collaboration within the United Nations system, with respect to both humanitarian and rehabilitation interventions, through the provision of a wide range of information, logistical, organizational and analytical services. The United Nations Coordination Unit is funded by UNDP.

54. Coordination of sectoral activities has been enhanced through the strengthening or creation of several inter-agency task forces and thematic working groups. In the health and nutrition sector, greater collaboration among United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations over the past year has led to a streamlining of interventions and improved standardization and quality of service. Under the lead of UNESCO and UNICEF, aid agencies are in the process of formulating joint plans and strategies for supporting the education sector in the country. In 1995, the United Nations Resident Coordinator established an inter-agency HIV/AIDS theme group, which, under the chairmanship of WHO, has been useful in bringing together United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to review the AIDS problem in Somalia and to explore possibilities for joint action. Similarly, an inter-agency task force on internally displaced persons, co-chaired by UNDP and IOM, was created to facilitate information exchange and the planning and implementation of coordinated United Nations interventions targeting displaced populations. Efforts in sectoral coordination have benefited significantly from the technical expertise and specialized services provided by the United Nations Development Office for Somalia. In February 1996 the Somalia Aid Coordination Body formed a special committee to enhance and provide guidance for sectoral coordination.

55. To facilitate and improve inter-agency coordination at the field level in Somalia, the United Nations Coordination Team in 1995 established the practice of designating one United Nations agency official as its focal point in each area of operation within the country. The focal points are selected on a rotating basis from among the senior field representatives of the United Nations agencies serving in each geographical area of operation in the country. The functions of the United Nations Coordination Team focal point include,

inter alia, facilitating the collection and exchange of relevant information, acting as a consensus builder among the United Nations agencies with regards to operational strategies and maintaining liaison with local authorities with a view to reaching solutions to common problems. The United Nations field coordination modality invites the involvement of international non-governmental organizations, whenever feasible.

56. In accordance with the recommendations of the inter-agency mission of February 1996 fielded on behalf of the Inter-agency Standing Committee, and in view of limited donor funding, innovative operational strategies are being pursued by the United Nations agencies and organizations in order to maximize the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations activities in the country. In the area of air transport, the United Nations agencies under the leadership of WFP are entering into joint leasing arrangements to consolidate their aircraft services, in the interests of reducing costs and providing adequate capacity to meet the needs of all United Nations agencies. Also in line with the mission's recommendations, agreements for the establishment of common premises and the joint sharing of communications and security facilities are being explored by the United Nations agencies.

V. IMPACT OF SECURITY PROBLEMS

57. Humanitarian operations in Somalia continue to be severely impeded by security problems, including looting and inter-clan violence. While the civil conflict over the past year has often been localized and of a low level of intensity, the fighting has at times been heavy, claiming the lives of many innocent civilians, including women and children. There have been numerous incidents and attacks directed at or affecting humanitarian agencies and staff throughout Somalia, some ending tragically. As a result, assistance programmes have been suspended or greatly curtailed in several areas of the country. Overall, the level of access to civilian populations in Somalia has deteriorated since September 1995.

58. Security conditions in northern Somalia have generally been favourable for the implementation of United Nations agency programmes, while instability and conflict have seriously disrupted the flow of relief and rehabilitation assistance in southern Somalia. Where security conditions permit, United Nations assistance is delivered under the direct supervision of international staff. There are currently about 40 United Nations international staff in Somalia, with presence in Hargeisa, Berbera, Boroma, Bossaso, Galcayo, Kismayo and Jowhar. In areas where security conditions preclude the permanent presence of international staff, United Nations agency activities are undertaken by national staff, who in many cases are facing increasingly stressful conditions and attempts at intimidation by some local communities. The regular monitoring of project activities has been complicated by prevailing security conditions in many areas of the country.

59. In parts of southern Somalia, the need for relief assistance has risen, while the United Nations ability to deliver food and non-food supplies has seriously declined because of the worsening security conditions. Since the capture of Baidoa by the forces of General Mohamed Aidid in September 1995,

virtually all United Nations agency offices in the Bay and Bakool regions have remained closed and all non-emergency assistance programmes have been suspended. During the takeover of Baidoa, 20 international staff members of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations were temporarily detained and most United Nations equipment and supplies were looted or lost. Sporadic fighting has continued to take place in the Bay and Bakool regions. In view of the situation, there has been no return to the area by United Nations international staff and the scale of operations executed by national staff has been drastically reduced. Relief and rehabilitation assistance to the Juba valley has also been very problematic owing to insecurity. The situation in southern Somalia has contributed to renewed population movements and has prevented to a large extent the implementation of resettlement programmes for internally displaced persons.

60. Mogadishu remains a tense and divided city and the situation is currently not conducive to the permanent presence of United Nations international staff or to non-emergency operations. Some non-governmental organizations have continued to post international staff to Mogadishu, but their presence has been maintained at minimal levels. The main airport in Mogadishu has remained closed since March 1995. In October 1995, fighting increased in intensity between rival factions in the city, causing the country's main port in south Mogadishu to cease functioning and to have a negative effect on the flow of humanitarian assistance to the city and to the interior regions of the country. Relief supplies and commercial goods have since been delivered through smaller ports near Mogadishu, but use of these alternate ports is an unsatisfactory substitute. In April 1996, inter-factional fighting resurfaced in south Mogadishu, killing hundreds of civilians and displacing many more, and having a severe impact on the humanitarian situation in the city. In addition, several United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations operating in south Mogadishu in 1996 have had relief supplies seized by militia men and have experienced other obstacles that have further restricted implementation of essential assistance programmes targeting the city's vulnerable population.

61. Common arrangements for United Nations security are in place under the leadership of the United Nations designated official for security matters, who is also the UNDP Resident Representative and United Nations Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator for Somalia. Under the arrangement, a United Nations security officer is posted in each operational area in Somalia where United Nations agency international personnel are present. As part of the arrangement, the United Nations agencies contribute funding or personnel for the common security system, which is managed by the designated official in consultation with the United Nations Coordination Team. Presently, there are a total of six international security officers serving the United Nations system in Somalia.

VI. ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY MEMBER STATES

62. In addition to the activities described above, several Member States have provided information on assistance to Somalia pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/58 G.

Denmark

63. The Government of Denmark made contributions totalling DKr 14,776,383 towards relief programmes in Somalia in 1995: DKr 4 million went to UNHCR for repatriation and integration activities; DKr 5 million went towards a UNICEF water project in Mogadishu; DKr 76,383 went to WFP for the secondment of port personnel; and DKr 500,000 was provided to IOM for the registration and transportation of internally displaced persons. DKr 3 million was provided to the Danish Red Cross towards the ICRC aid programme in Somalia, while a further DKr 1 million was provided to the Danish Red Cross for IFRC emergency and repatriation programmes. In 1996 the Government of Denmark provided a total of DKr 11,305,346 towards relief assistance in Somalia. Of that amount, DKr 2.2 million went to UNICEF food aid distribution to internally displaced persons, DKr 5 million the Danish Red Cross for ICRC programmes and DKr 4,105,346 to Adventist Development Relief Agency.

Finland

64. In 1995 the Government of Finland contributed a total of Fmk 3 million to Somalia, of which Fmk 2 million was donated to UNHCR and Fmk 1 million was provided to the Finnish Red Cross/ICRC. As at 30 June 1996, the Government of Finland had contributed Fmk 2 million to UNHCR and Fmk 400,000 to the Finnish Red Cross/ICRC for humanitarian assistance programmes in Somalia.

Germany

65. In 1995 the Government of Germany provided UNHCR with DM 500,000 to assist in the repatriation programme for Somali refugees in Djibouti. Food aid for Somalia totalling DM 2,651,000 was provided through the German non-governmental organization Deutsche Welt Hunger Hilfe. The Government of Germany also made a contribution of DM 40,000 towards the convening of a Department of Peackeeping Operations/United Nations Operation in Somalia Lessons Learned Seminar. In 1996 ICRC was the recipient of DM 490,000 to undertake its relief programme in Somalia.

Italy

66. The Italian Emergency Department, which in 1995 had no programme in Somalia because of the civil war, in 1996 pledged a financial programme of approximately Lit 3 billion to Somalia. Of this amount, Lit 800 million will go towards continuing the health and social programme of Garoe; and Lit 2.1 billion has been pledged to UNHCR and to UNICEF for their health and social programmes. A contribution of Lit 1 billion has also been pledged in favour of the United Nations Development Office for Somalia.

Japan

67. Between 1 April 1995 and 31 March 1996 the Government of Japan made a number of contributions to United Nations relief assistance programmes in Somalia. This includes US$ 4.6 million to UNHCR to assist in the repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya and the Cross Border Operation; $6,860,000 to WFP for programmes within Somalia as well as for refugees from Somalia (portions of this food were provided to refugees from Sudan and Ethiopia through WFP); and $2,940,000 to WFP for emergency food aid for war victims in Somalia.

Liechtenstein

68. In July 1996 Liechtenstein contributed Sw F 10,000 to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for its Somalia programme.

Norway

69. In 1996 the Government of Norway contributed a total of NKr 3,912,890 to Somalia. Of this amount, NKr 2,250,550 went to Norwegian Church Aid for rehabilitation programmes for returnees in the Gedo region and NKr 1,662,340 went to the UNICEF supplementary feeding programme.

Saudi Arabia

70. During the civil war in Somalia, the Government of Saudi Arabia provided food and relief assistance to the value of US$ 15 million for the people of Somalia. Special assistance of $5 million was provided by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdulaziz, to relieve the crises of hunger in Somalia. Another amount totalling $2,738,000 was provided as development assistance. The Saudi Arabia Crescent Society is continuing the process of collecting contributions on the popular level for the people of Somalia. These contributions, which are in kind, are sent on a regular basis to Somalia.

Switzerland

71. The Government of Switzerland provided a total of SFr 2,343,000 in humanitarian assistance to Somalia in 1996.

VII. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

72. Although there have been some positive developments since the last report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia (A/50/447), the situation in Somalia continues to frustrate the international community and to exact an enormous price upon the country's population. Continued destruction of property, wanton violence and the ensuing displacement of civilians, in particular in the southern regions of the country, keep Somalia in an extremely precarious humanitarian situation. This is further complicated by the continued closure of the port of Mogadishu, seriously affecting the general food imports and relief food assistance. United Nations agencies and national and international non-governmental organizations are therefore required to remain at

the forefront of relief interventions in these areas, expending much of their effort in ensuring that waves of disaster are held at bay.

73. In areas of the south where significant gains had been made in recent years through the combined efforts of committed Somali communities and national and international humanitarian partners, the self-serving actions of a few have had consequences for many. The events that occurred in September 1995, when the town of Baidoa in the agriculturally rich Bay region was overrun by the militia of General Aidid, are a case in point. The area had enjoyed relative peace and stability and was, as a result, the main focus of rehabilitation efforts in southern Somalia. Because of the success of programmes in the area, it had become a showcase of donor and agency activities and was a vital example of what could be achieved in a Somalia when citizens felt secure and could turn their attention towards production, and away from fear and despair. The incursion by the late General Aidid and the consequent disruption in agricultural production in what is the principal grain-producing area of the country had repercussions for Somalia as a whole, resulting in major setbacks for humanitarian and rehabilitation activities from which the region has still not recovered. Such insecurity and attacks on civilians and humanitarian programmes and partners continue to characterize the situation in the south. The recent naming of Hussein Farah Aidid as successor to his father, General Aidid, may have implications for the situation in southern Somalia. It is clear that unless there is commitment on the part of faction leaders that they will not continue to hold Somalia hostage to their political ambitions, the country will remain in a state of acute vulnerability and those who will continue to suffer will be the weakest and the poorest.

74. Throughout Somalia, a substantial burden has been placed upon United Nations agencies and their partners to increase their sectoral activities, largely because, in the absence of national institutions and authorities, international agencies have had to fulfil the role of facilitators and negotiators in very insecure and war-ravaged environments. But there are areas, notably in the north of the country, which show a marked interest in pursuing the ideals of peace and stability. Even where pockets of insecurity continue to exist, conditions in these areas are far less precarious for the general population. There we find the re-emergence of institutions and authorities, community-engendered capacity-building initiatives, the reconstruction of local economies and infrastructures for social services and the reactivation of trade activities and livestock production. International agencies for their part have focused more on a combination of relief and rehabilitation activities in those areas and have moved away from mainly emergency-oriented programmes. Efforts have focused to a large extent on sustainable community-based activities that support local economies and encourage and strengthen self-support and self-reliance.

75. United Nations agencies and their partners are involved in supporting the revitalization of local economies, generating employment, providing training, enhancing local capacities and rehabilitating infrastructure. In addition to many other activities, children are being vaccinated, schools are being built, wells dug and chlorinated, aviation and port facilities managed, health facilities constructed and livestock production assisted. All of these multisectoral activities are part of a concerted effort by the United Nations

agencies to make a contribution towards good governance in Somalia. Rehabilitation efforts can thus be said to be taking place in those areas of Somalia where leaders and communities have shown themselves ready and willing to move away from protracted warfare and violence.

76. There is clearly a stark difference in assistance requirements in Somalia from one geographical region to another and those differences are inextricably linked to the security environments that exist. Bearing in mind that Somalia is a composite of these differing environments, the United Nations agencies are in the process of developing a resource mobilization strategy and appeal document that reflect the problematic context in which operations are carried out. While diminishing donor resources for Somalia have reined in the operations of humanitarian partners, donors are encouraged to adopt a proactive and forward-thinking approach with regard to Somalia. The international community should support the efforts of the United Nations agencies and their partners in order to encourage and reward the continuance of progress in those areas of Somalia which are making rigorous efforts to move forward and in order that other areas of the country can begin to see the concrete advantages and developments the citizens of Somalia can enjoy when their leaders are willing to break the cycle of despair.